Introduction to Operating Systems

What's an OS?

The OS is a layer between applications and hardware to ease development.

- · Abstraction. provides abstraction for applications:
- o manages + hides hardware details
- o uses low-level interfaces (not available to applications)
- multiplexes hardware to multiple programs (virtualization)
- o makes hardware use efficient for applications
- Protection
- from processes using up all resources (accounting, allocation)
- from processes writing into other processes memory
- · Resource Management.
 - o manages + multiplexes hardware resources
 - o decides between conflicting requests for resource use
 - o goal: efficient + fair resource use
- Control.
 - o controls program execution
 - o prevents errors and improper computer use

→ no universally accepted definition

Hardware Overview

- Bus: CPU(s)/devices/memory (conceptually) connected to common bus
- o CPU(s)/devices competing for memory cycles/bus
- o all entities run concurrently
- o today: multiple buses
- · Device controller: has local buffer and is in charge of particular device
- Interplay:
- 1. CPU issues commands, moves data to devices
- 2. Device controller informs APIC that it has finished operation
- 3. APIC signals CPU
- 4. CPU receives device/interrupt number from APIC, executes handler

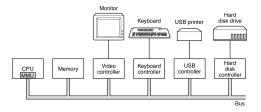


Figure 1: Traditional bus design.

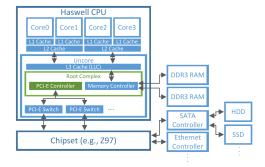


Figure 2: Modern bus design.

Central Processing Unit (CPU) — Operation

- · Principle:
- 1. *fetches* instructions from memory,
- 2. executes them
- During execution: (meta-)data is stored in CPU-internal registers, i.e.
- o general purpose registers
- floating point registers
- o instruction pointer (IP)
- stack pointer (SP) program status word (PSW)

CPU — Modes of Execution

- User mode (x86: Ring 3/CPL 3):
 - only non-privileged instructions may be executed
 - o cannot manage hardware → protection
- Kernel mode (x86: Ring 0/CPL 0):
- o all instructions allowed
- o can manage hardware with privileged instructions

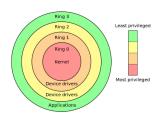


Figure 3: The different protection layers in the *ring model*.

Random Access Memory (RAM)

- Principle: keeps currently executed instructions + data
- · Connectivity:
 - o today: CPUs have built-in memory controller
 - o CPU caches: "wired" to CPU
 - RAM: connected via pins
 - PCI-E switches: connected via pins

Caches

- Problem: RAM delivers instructions/data slower than CPU can execute
- · Locality principle:
- o spatial locality: future refs often near previous accesses (e.g. next byte in array)
- o temporal locality: future refs often at previously accessed ref (e.g. loop counter)
- Solution: caching helps mitigating this memory wall
 - 1. copy used information temporarily from slower to faster storage
 - 2. check faster storage first before going down memory hierarchy
- 3. if not found, data is copied to cache and used from there
- · Access latency:
 - o register: ~1 CPU cycle
 - o L1 cache (per core): ~4 CPU cycles
 - ∘ L2 cache (per core pair): ~12 CPU cycles
 - L3 cache/LLC (per uncore): ~28 CPU cycles (~25 GiB/s)
 - DDR3-12800U RAM: ~28 CPU cycles + ~ 50ns (~12 GiB/s)

Device controlling

- Device controller: controls device, accepts commands from OS via device driver
- Device registers/memory:
 - o control device by writing device registers
 - o read status of device by reading device registers
- o pass data to device by reading/writing device memory
- Device registers/memory access:
- port-mapped IO (PMIO): use special CPU instructions to access port-mapped registers/memory
- 2. memory-mapped IO (MMIO):
 - o use same address space for RAM and device memory
 - o some addresses map to RAM, others to different devices
 - o access device's memory region to access device registers/memory
- 3. **Hybrid**: some devices use hybrid approaches using both

Summary

- The OS is an abstraction layer between applications and hardware (multiplexes hardware, hides hardware details, provides protection between processes/users)
- The CPU provides a **separation** of User and Kernel mode (which are required for an OS to provide protection between applications)
- CPU can execute commands faster than memory can deliver instructions/data
 — memory hierarchy mitigates this memory wall, needs to be carefully managed by OS to minimize slowdowns
- device drivers control hardware devices through PMIO/MMIO
- Devices can signal the CPU (and through the CPU notify the OS) through interrupts

OS Concepts

OS Invocation

- OS Kernel does not always run in background!
- · Occasions invoking kernel, switching to kernel mode:
- 1. System calls: User-Mode processes require higher privileges
- 2. Interrupts: CPU-external device sends signal
- 3. Exceptions: CPU signals unexpected condition

System Calls — Motivation

- Problem: protect processes from one another
- Idea: Restrict processes by running them in user-mode
- · → Problem: now processes cannot manage hardware,...
- who can switch between processes?
- who decides if process may open certain file?
- → Idea: OS provides services to apps
- 1. app calls system if service is needed (syscall)
- 2. OS checks if app is allowed to perform action
- 3. if app may perform action and hasn't exceeded quota, OS performs action in behalf of app in kernel mode

System Calls — Examples

- fd = open(file, how,...) open file for read/write/both
- documented e.g. in man 2 write
- overview in man 2 syscalls

System Calls vs. APIs

- Syscalls: interface between apps and OS services, limited number of well-defined entry points to kernel
- APIs: often used by programmers to make syscalls (e.g. printf library call uses write syscall)
- · common APIs: Win32, POSIX, C API

System Calls — Implementation

- Trap Instruction: single syscall interface (entry point) to kernel
- o switches CPU to kernel mode, enters kernel in same way for all syscalls
- o system call dispatcher in kernel then acts as syscall multiplexer
- Syscall Identification: number passed to trap instruction
 - o Syscall Table maps syscall numbers to kernel functions
 - o Dispatcher decides where to jump based on number and table
 - programs (e.g. stdlib) have syscall number compiled in!
 - → never reuse old syscall numbers in future kernel versions

Interrupts

- · Devices: use interrupts to signal predefined conditions to OS
- reminder: device has "interrupt line" to CPU (e.g. device controller informs CPU that operation is finished)
- Programmable Interrupt Controller: manages interrupts
 - o interrupts can be *masked* (queued, delivered when interrupt unmasked)
 - o queue has finite length → interrupts can get lost
- · Examples:
- 1. *timer-interrupt*: periodically interrupts processes, switches to kernel → can then switch to different processes for fairness
- 2. *network interface card* interrupts CPU when packet was received → can deliver packet to process and free NIC buffer
- Interrupt process:
- CPU looks up interrupt vector (= table pinned in memory, contains addresses of all service routines)
- CPU transfers control to respective interrupt service routine in OS that handles interrupt
- \rightarrow interrupt service routine must first save interrupted process's state (instruction pointer, stack pointer, status word)

Exceptions

- Motivation: unusual condition → impossible for CPU to continue processing
- → Exception generated within CPU:
- 1. CPU interrupts program, gives kernel control
- 2. kernel determines reason for exception
- 3. if kernel can resolve problem → does so, continues faulting instruction
- 4. kills process if not

 Difference to Interrupts: interrupts can happen in any context, exceptions always occur asynchronous and in process context

OS Concepts — Physical Memory

- up to early 60s:
- o programs loaded and run directly in physical memory
- o program too large → partitioned manually into *overlays*
- o OS: swaps overlays between disk and memory
- o different jobs could observe/modify each other

OS Concepts — Address Spaces

- Motivation: bad programs/people need to be isolated
- Idea: give every job the illusion of having all memory to itself
 - o every job has own address space, can't name addresses of others
 - o jobs always and only use virtual addresses

Virtual Memory — Indirect Addressing

- MMU: every CPU has built-in memory management unit (MMU)
- Principle: translates virtual addresses to physical addresses at every load/store
 → address translation protects one program from another
- · Definitions:
- o Virtual address: address in process' address space
- o Physical address: address of real memory

Virtual Memory — Memory Protection

- · Kernel-only Virtual Addresses
 - o kernel typically part of all address spaces
- o ensures that apps can't touch kernel memory
- Read-only virtual addresses: can be enforced by MMU
 - o allows safe sharing of memory between apps
- · Execute Disable: can be enforced by MMU
 - o makes code injection attacks harder

Virtual Memory — Page Faults

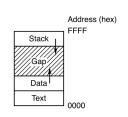
- Motivation: not all addresses need to be mapped at all times
- MMU issues page fault exception when accessed virtual address isn't mapped
- OS handles page faults by loading faulting addresses and then continuing the program
- → memory can be *over-committed*: more memory than physically available can be allocated to application
- Illegal addresses: page faults also issued by MMU on illegal memory accesses

OS Concepts — Processes

- Process: program in execution ("instance" of program)
- each process is associated with
 - Process Control Block (PCB): contains information about allocated resources
 - o virtual Address Space (AS):
 - all (virtual) memory locations a program can name
 - starts at 0 and runs up to a maximum
 - address 123 in AS1 generally ≠ address 123 in AS2
 - indirect addressing → different ASes to different programs
 - → protection between processes

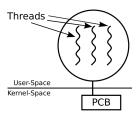
OS Concepts — Address Space Layout

- Sections: address spaces typically laid-out in different sections
- o memory addresses between sections illegal
- o illegal addresses → page fault (segmentation fault)
- o OS usually kills process causing segmentation fault
- Important sections:
- Stack: function history, local variables
- o Data: Constants, static/global variables, strings
- o Text: Program code



OS Concepts — Threads

- **Thread**: represents execution state of process (≥ 1 thread per process)
- IP: stores currently executed instruction (address in text section)
- SP: stores address of stack top (> 1 threads \rightarrow multiple stacks!)
- o *PSW*: contains flags about execution history (e.g. last calculation was $0 \to used$ in following jump instruction)
- o more general purpose registers, floating point registers,...

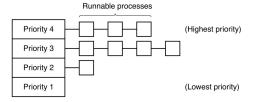


OS Concepts — Policies vs. Mechanisms

- Mechanism: implementation of what is done (e.g. commands to write to HDD)
- Policy: rules which decide when what is done and how much (e.g. how often, how
 many resources are used,...)
- → mechanisms can be reused even when policy changes

OS Concepts — Scheduling

- Motivation: multiple processes/threads available → OS needs to switch between them (for multitasking)
- Scheduler: decides which job to run next (policy) tries to
- o provide fairness
- o meet performance goals
- o adhere to priorities
- Dispatcher: performs task-switching (mechanism)



OS Concepts — Files

- Motivation: OS hides peculiarities of file storage, programmer uses deviceindependent files/directories
- **Files**: associate *file name* and *offset* with bytes
- Directories: associate directory names with directory names or file names
- File System: ordered block collection
- o main task: translate (dir name + file name + offset) to block
- $\verb| o programmer uses file system operations to operate on files (\verb| open, read, seek|) \\$
- processes can communicate directly through special named pipe file (used with same operations as any other file)

OS Concepts — Directory Tree

- **Directories**: form *directory tree/file hierarchy* \rightarrow structure data
- Root Directory: topmost directory in tree
- Path Name: used to specify file

OS Concepts — Mounting

- Unix: common to orchestrate multiple file systems in single file hierarchy
- file systems can be mounted on directory
- Win: manage multiple directory hierarchies with drive letters (e.g. C:\Users)

OS Concepts — Storage Management

- OS: provides uniform view of information storage to file systems
- o Drivers: hide specific hardware devices → hides device peculiarities
- \circ general interface abstracts physical properties to logical units \rightarrow block
- Performance: OS increases I/O performance:
- o Buffering: Store data temporarily while transferred
- o Caching: Store data parts in faster storage
- *Spooling*: Overlap one job's output with other job's input

Summary

- OS: provides abstractions for and protection between applications
- Kernel: does not always run certain events invoke kernel
 - o syscall: process asks kernel for service
 - o interrupt: device sends signal that OS has to handle
 - o exception: CPU encounters unusual situation
- ${\bf Processes}:$ encapsulate resources needed to run program in OS
- o threads: represent different execution states of process
- o address space: all memory process can name
- o resources: allocated resources, e.g., open files
- · Scheduler decides which process to run next when multi-tasking
- Virtual Memory implements address spaces, provides protection between
- File system abstracts background store using I/O drivers, provides simple interface (files + directories)

Processes

The Process Abstraction

- Motivation: computers (seem to) do "several things at the same time" (quick process switching → multiprogramming)
- Model: process abstraction models this concurrency:
 - o container contains information about program execution
- o conceptually, every progress has own "'virtual CPU"
- o execution context is changed on process switch
- o dispatcher switches context when switching processes
- context switch: dispatcher saves current registers/memory mappings, restores those of next process

Process-Cooking Analogy

- Program/Process like Recipe/Cooking
- $\boldsymbol{Recipe}\!:$ lists ingredients, gives algorithm what to do when
- → program describes memory layout/CPU instructions
- Cooking: activity of using the recipe
- → process is activity of executing a program
- · multiple similar recipes for same dish
- → multiple programs may solve same problem
- recipe can be cooked in different kitchens at the same time
- → program can be run on different CPUs at the same time (as different processes)
- multiple people can cook one recipe
- → one process can have several worker threads

Concurrency vs. Parallelism

- OS uses currency + parallelism to implement multiprogramming
 - 1. **Concurrency**: multiple processes, one CPU
 - → not at the same time
- 2. **Parallelism**: multiple processes, multiple CPU
 - → at the same time

Virtual Memory Abstraction — Address Spaces

- every process has own virtual addresses (vaddr)
- MMU relocates each load/store to physical memory (pmem)
- · processes never see physical memory, can't access it directly
- + MMU can enforce protection (mappings in kernel mode)
- + programs can see more memory than available
 - o 80:20 rule: 80% of process memory idle, 20% active
 - o can keep working set in RAM, rest on disk
- need special MMU hardware

Address Space (Process View)

- Motivation: code/data/state need to be organized within process
- → address space layout
- Data types:
 - 1. fixed size data items
- 2. data naturally freed in reverse allocation order
- 3. data allocated/freed "randomly"
- compiler/architecture determine how large int is and what instructions are used in text section (code)

· Loader determines based on exe file how executed program is placed in memory

Segments — Fixed-Size Data + Code

- some data in programs never changes or will be written but never grows/shrinks
- → memory can be statically allocated on process creation
- BSS segment (block started by symbol):
- o statically allocated variables/non-initialized variables
- o executable file typically contains starting address + size of BSS
- entire segment initially 0
- Data segment: fixed-size, initialized data elements (e.g. global variables)
- · Read-only data segment: constant numbers, strings
- · All three sometimes summarized as one segment
- compiler and OS decide ultimately where to place which data/how many segments exist

Segments — Stack

- · some data naturally freed in reverse allocation order
 - o very easy memory management (stack grows upwards)
- · fixed segment starting point
- store top of latest allocation in **stack pointer** (SP) (initialized to starting point)
- allocate a byte data structure: SP += a; return(SP a)
- free a byte data structure: SP -= a

Segments — Heap (Dynamic Memory Allocation)

- some data "'randomly"' allocated/freed
- · two-tier memory allocation:
- 1. allocate large memory chunk (heap segment) from OS
 - base address + break pointer (BRK)
 - o process can get more/give back memory from/to OS
- 2. dynamically partition chunk into smaller allocations
 - o malloc/free can be used in random oder
 - $\circ\;$ purely user-space, no need to contact kernel

OxFFFFFFFF Reserved for OS Stack AS Heap BSS Data Read-Only Data Text Ox00000000

Summary

Processes: recipe vs. cooking = program vs. process

- processes = resource container for OS
- process feels alone (has own CPU and memory)
- · OS implements multiprogramming through rapid process switching

Process API

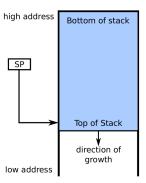
Execution Model — Assembler (simplified)

- Principle: OS interacts directly with compiled programs
- $\circ \ \ switch \ between \ processes/threads \rightsquigarrow save/restore \ state$
- $\circ \ \ deal \ with/pass \ on \ \textit{signals/exceptions}$
- $\circ~$ receive requests from applications
- Instructions:
- $\circ\:$ mov: Copy referenced data from second operand to first operand
- o add/sub/mul/div: Add,...from second operand to first operand
- inc/dec: increment/decrement register/memory location

- o shl/shr: shift first operand left/right by amount given by second operand
- o and/or/xor: calculate bitwise and,...of two operands storing result in first
- o not: bitwise negate operand

Execution Model — Stack (x86)

- stack pointer (SP): holds address of stack top (growing downwards)
- stack frames: larger stack chunks
- base pointer (BP): used to organize stack frames



Execution Model — jump/branch/call commands (x86)

- jmp: continue execution at operand address
- j\$condition: jump depending on PSW content
 - o true → jump
- o false → continue
- examples: je (jump equal), jz (jump zero)
- call: push function to stack and jump to it
- ${\tt return:}$ return from function (jump to return address)

Execution Model — Application Binary Interface (ABI)

- Idea: standardizes binary interface between programs, modules, OS:
 - o executable/object file layout
- o calling conventions
- o alignment rules
- calling conventions: standardize exact way function calls are implemented
- → interoperability between compilers

Execution Model — calling conventions (x86)

- function call caller:
 - 1. save local scope state
- 2. set up parameters where function can find them
- 3. transfer control flow
- function call called function:
- 1. set up new local scope (local variables)
- 2. perform duty
- 3. put return value where caller can find it
- 4. jump back to caller (IP)

Passing parameters to the system

- parameters are passed through system calls
- call number + specific parameters must be passed
- parameters can be transferred through
 - CPU registers (~6)
- Main Memory (heap/stack more parameters, data types)
- · ABI specifies how to pass parameters
- return code needs to be returned to application
 - o negative: error code
- o positive + 0: success
- o usually returned via A+D registers

System call handler

- implements the actual service called through a syscall:
- 1. saves tainted registers
- 2. reads passed parameters
- 3. sanitizes/checks parameters
- 4. checks if caller has enough permissions to perform the requested action
- 5. performs requested action in behalf of the caller
- 6. returns to caller with success/error code

Process API — creation

- · process creation events:
- 1. system initialization
- 2. process creation syscall
- 3. user requests process creation
- 4. batch job-initiation
- · events map to two mechanisms:
- 1. Kernel spawns initial user space process on boot (Linux: init)
- 2. User space processes can spawn other processes (within their quota)

Process API — creation (POSIX)

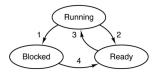
- PID: identifies process
- pid = fork(): duplicates current process:
- o returns 0 to new child
- o returns new PID to parent
- → child and parent independent after fork
- exec(name): replaces own memory based on executable file
- o name specifies binary executable file
- exit(status): terminates process, returns status
- pid = waitpid(pid, &status): wait for child termination
- o pid: process to wait for
- o status: points to data structure that returns information about the process (e.g., exit status)
- o passed pid is returned on success, -1 otherwise
- process tree: processes create child processes, which create child processes, ...
- o parent and child execute concurrently
- o parent waits for child to terminate (collecting the exit state)

Daemons

- = program designed to run in the background
- detached from parent process after creation, reattached to process tree root (init)

Process States

- · blocking: process does nothing but wait
 - usually happens on syscalls (OS doesn't run process until event happens)



- 1. Process blocks for input
- Scheduler picks another process
 Scheduler picks this process
- Input becomes available

Process Termination

- · different termination events:
- 1. normal exit (voluntary)
 - -return Oatendofmain
 - -exit(0)
- 2. error exit (voluntary)
 - -return $x (x \neq 0)$ at end of main
 - $-exit(x)(x \neq 0)$
 - -abort()
- 3. fatal error (involuntary)
 - OS kills process after exception
 - process exceeds allowed resources
- 4. killed by another process (involuntary)
 - another process sends kill signal (only as parent process or administrator)

Exit Status

- voluntary exit: process returns exit status (integer)
- resources not completely freed after process terminates → Zombie or process **stub** (contains exit status until collected via waitpid)
- **Orphans**: Processes without parents
- usually adopted by init
- o some systems kill all children when parent is killed
- exit status on involuntary exit:
- o Bits 0-6: signal number that killed process (0 on normal exit)
- o Bit 7: set if process was killed by signal
- o Bits 8-15: 0 if killed by signal (exit status on normal exit)

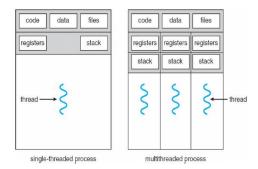
Threads

Processes vs. Threads

- Traditional OS: each process has
 - o own address space
 - o wn set of allocated resources
 - o one thread of execution (= one execution state)
- · Modern OS: processes + threads of execution handled more flexibly
- o processes provide abstraction of address space and resources
- o threads provide abstraction of execution states of that address space
- Exceptions:
 - o sometimes different threads have different address spaces
 - Linux: threads = regular processes with shared resources and AS regions

Threads - why?

- many programs do multiple things at once (e.g. web server)
- → writing program as many sequential threads may be easier than with blocking operations
- Processes: rarely share data (if, then explicitly)
- Threads: closely related, share data



Threads — POSIX

- · PThread: base object with
 - o identifier (thread ID, TID)
- o register set (including IP and SP)
- o stack area to hold execution state
- · Pthread_create: create new thread
- Pass: pointer to pthread_t (will hold TID after successful call)
- o Pass: attributes, start function, arguments
- o Returns: 0 on success, error value else
- · Pthread_exit: terminate calling thread
 - Pass: exit code (casted to void pointer)
 - Free's resources (e.g. stack)
- Pthread_join: wait for specified thread to exit
- Pass: ptread_t to wait for (or -1 for any thread)
- o Pass: pointer to pointer for exit code
- o Returns: 0 on success, error value else
- Pthread_yield: release CPU to let another thread run

Threads — Problems

- Processes vs. Threads:
 - o Processes: only share resources explicitly
 - o Threads: more shared state → more can go wrong
- · Challenges: programmer needs to take care of
- o activities: dividing, ordering, balancing
- o data: dividing
- o shared data: access synchronizing

PCB vs. TCP

- PCB (process control block): information needed to implement processes o always known to OS
- TCB (thread control block): per thread data
 - o OS knowledge depends on thread model

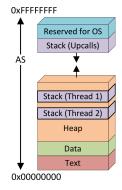
PCB	TCB
Address space	Instruction pointer
Global variables	Registers
Open files	Stack
Child processes	State
Pending alarms	

Thread models

- · Kernel Thread: known to OS kernel
- User Thread: known to process
- N:1-Model: kernel only knows one of possibly multiple threads
 - N:1 user threads = user level threads (ULT)
- 1:1-Model: each user thread maps to one kernel thread
- o 1:1 user threads = kernel level threads (KLT)
- M:N-Model (hybrid model): flexible mapping of user threads to less kernel threads

Thread models - N:1

- Kernel only manages process → multiple threads unknown to kernel
- Threads managed in user-space library (e.g. GNU Portable Threads)
- · Pro:
- + faster thread management operations (up to 100 times)
- + flexible scheduling policy
- + few system resources
- + usable even if OS doesn't support threads
- · Con:
 - no parallel execution
 - whole process blocks if one user thread blocks
 - reimplementing OS parts (e.g. scheduler)
- . Stack
- o main stack known to OS used by thread library
- own execution state (= stack) dynamically allocated by user thread library for each thread
- o possibly own stack for each exception handler
- · Heap:
- o concurrent heap use possible
- o Attention: not all heaps are reentrant
- Data: divided into BSS, data and read-only data here as well

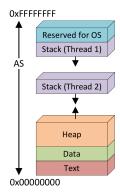


Thread models — 1:1

- kernel knows + manages every thread
- · Pros:
- + real parallelism possible
- + threads block individually
- · Cons:
 - OS manages every thread in system (TCB, stacks,...)
 - Syscalls needed for thread management
 - scheduling fixed in OS
- Stack:
- own execution state (= stack) for every thread
- o possibly own stack for (each) exception handler
- Heap:
- $\circ\;$ parallel heap use possible
- $\circ \;\; Attention:$ not all heaps are thread-safe
- $\circ~$ if thread-safe: not all heap implementations perform well with many threads
- Data: divided into BSS, data and read-only data here as well

Thread models — M:N

- Principle: M ULTs are maps to (at most) N KLT
- $\circ~\mathit{Goal}$: pros of ULT and KLT non-blocking with quick management
- create sufficient number of KLTs and flexibly allocate ULTs to them



- o Idea: if ULT blocks ULTs can be switched in userspace
- Pros
- + flexible scheduling policy
- + efficient execution

· Cons

- hard to debug
- hard to implement (e.g. blocking, number of KLTs,...)
- Implementation Up-calls:
 - o kernel notices that thread will block → sends signal to process
 - o up-call notifies process of thread id and event that happened
- o exception handler of process schedules a different process thread
- o kernel later informs process that blocking event finished via other up-call

Summary

- · programs often do closely related things at once
 - mapped to thread abstraction: multiple threads of execution operate in same process
- differentiation between process information (PCB) and thread information (TCB)
- thread models:
- $\circ N: 1$: threads fully managed in user-space
- 1:1: threads fully managed by kernel
- $\circ M:N$: threads are flexibly managed either in user-space or kernel
- multi-threaded programs operate on same data concurrently or even parallel:
- o synchronization: accessing such data must be synchronized
- → makes writing such programs challenging